

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE****PROVIDING BREAK POINTS IN VIRUS SCANNING OPERATION**

A computer virus scanning system is described in which during the scanning operation  
5 a measurement value indicative of the amount of data processing performed is calculated and  
this measurement value used to trigger breaks in the virus scanning operation. The triggered  
breaks can be used to perform a determination as to whether or not the virus scanning  
operations should be early terminated. One possibility is to measure the total size of the data  
10 processed during the virus scanning operation and calculate a ratio of this compared to the  
size of the computer file being virus scanned. If this calculated ratio exceeds a predetermined  
threshold, then virus scanning may be terminated. Another possibility is to associate a  
complexity value with each of a plurality of tests applied in the virus scanning operation. A  
total for these complexity values may be used to trigger the breaks and also to trigger early  
termination upon exceeding of respective threshold levels.

15 [Figure 3]